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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR PRM/AFR, AF/E

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TAGS: [KE](#) [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [SO](#)

SUBJECT: GOK BORDER MANAGEMENT SUPPORTS REQUESTED IN RETURN
FOR A FOURTH DADAAB CAMP

REF: A. SECSTATE 101182

[B](#). SECSTATE 100710

[C](#). NAIROBI 2093

Classified By: Ambassador Michael Ranneberger for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#). (SBU) SUMMARY: On October 21, PRM Assistant Secretary (A/S) Eric Schwartz and Ambassador Ranneberger met with three senior government of Kenya (GOK) officials (Director General of National Security Intelligence Services Michael Gichangi, Minister of Immigration Otieno Kajwang, and Minister of Internal Security George Saitoti) to press for a fourth refugee camp in Dadaab. Although Gichangi was resistant to the notion of a fourth camp, Kajwang indicated Saitoti would be forthcoming. In fact, Saitoti indicated that before a fourth camp can be approved, the GOK had to be "fully assisted" to build its capacity to patrol its border and effectively screen asylum seekers. Minister Saitoti said the GOK had legitimate and serious security concerns with the large number of Somalis entering Kenya and looked to the USG to help Kenya meet its border management needs. Saitoti said Kenya's border management needs exceeded the screening center and police improvement activities promised by UNHCR High Commissioner Antonio Guterres during his August visit.

[2](#). (C) A/S Schwartz and the Ambassador reassured GOK officials that the USG was committed to assisting Kenya in strengthening its border management capacities, to increasing support to communities hosting refugees, and to expanding the screening and registration of refugees entering Kenya. However, the A/S and Ambassador cautioned the GOK officials that the GOK had to have realistic expectations for stepped up USG assistance to Kenya's border management program and that stepped up border management support must not be used to deter legitimate asylum seekers from entering Kenya. The Ambassador agreed to follow-up with Minister Saitoti. With both Maj-General Gichangi and Minister Saitoti, the Ambassador and the A/S made clear USG opposition to any recruitment of Somalis in refugee camps. END SUMMARY.

GOK Concerns About the Somali Refugee Population

[3](#). (SBU) The three GOK officials acknowledged that the humanitarian situation in Dadaab was "appalling" and "horrific." They also highlighted the various GOK concerns about the Somali refugee population: Somali refugees were treated better than host community residents, Somalis entering Kenya were predominantly economic migrants and not asylum seekers, host communities had legitimate unmet grievances in hosting refugees and that a fourth camp would "pull" even more Somalis into Kenya. General Gichangi emphasized that Somalis should be assisted inside Somalia rather than in Kenya. A/S Schwartz explained the difficulty of protecting asylum seekers in safe havens and made clear

that the GOK would get no international support for such an effort. He also spoke of the impracticability of transferring large numbers of Somalis from Dadaab to Kakuma. A/S Schwartz did acknowledge that host communities had been impacted by the protracted refugee situation and reaffirmed USG commitment to expanding environmental rehabilitation and economic development programs for them.

GOK Expects Assistance to Manage Its Border Areas

14. (SBU) All three officials cited the security challenges to Kenya posed by large numbers of unscreened Somalis entering into the country as the real obstacle preventing the allocation of land for a fourth camp in Dadaab. Maj-General Gichangi said the large and uncontrolled influx of Somalis had "profound" security implications for Kenya. At the same time, Minister Kajwang said that if the GOK's security concerns were met, the government would approve land for a fourth Dadaab camp. Minister Saitoti said GOK's security concerns emanated from the government's lack of capacity to effectively manage its borders or to adequately screen Somalis before they entered the camps or further into Kenya. He said the GOK was not able to determine who truly needed asylum vice who was an al Shabaab or other infiltrator trying to enter Kenya to do harm in the country. While acknowledging UNHCR High Commissioner Antonio Guterres' offer to establish a screening center for asylum seekers between Liboi and the Dadaab camps and to provide resources for an increased Administrative Police (AP) presence to patrol the camps, Minister Saitoti said what the GOK required was "over

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and above" what UNHCR was able to provide. Minister Saitoti said the GOK was looking to be "fully assisted" in patrolling the border to stop "bad elements" from entering Kenya and to be adequately equipped to screen Somalis crossing into Kenya. Saitoti said the GOK was looking to the USG for a "real package" enabling the AP and other security forces to better manage the border. He hinted that the "real package" should include vehicles and training.

"We Are In This Together"

15. (SBU) The A/S and Ambassador reiterated during each meeting that it was in Kenya's interest to manage the refugee flows as best it could as refugee flows would most likely continue even if Somalia were to be stabilized. They said if Kenya chose to manage the flows responsibly, Kenya could expect cooperation and support from the international community with the US being a key supporter. Both also reassured each GOK interlocutor that the USG would do everything possible to support the UNHCR "package" as outlined by the High Commissioner (Reftel C), that we will support economic development and environmental rehabilitation programs for communities hosting refugees, and that, in principle, we will seek to increase our support so GOK can better manage its borders. While the latter may include increased bilateral support for the GOK's rapid border reaction force, establishment of additional screening centers and the introduction of digital fingerprinting, both the A/S and Ambassador cautioned GOK officials to have "reasonable expectations" that increased assistance will enable Kenya to control or completely stop Somalis from entering the country.

16. (SBU) The A/S said while the USG wants to help Kenya improve its border management capacities, he cautioned that increased USG support must not be used to stop legitimate asylum seekers from entering Kenya or to deny legitimate asylum seekers from receiving needed assistance in Kenya. He added that key to being able to screen and manage the flow of Somalis into Kenya, however, was allocation of land for a

fourth camp in Dadaab. The Ambassador noted he would follow-up with Minister Saitoti.

Recruitment Not Supported

¶7. (C) Both the Ambassador and the A/S expressed strong opposition to military or para-military recruitment of Somali refugees. When the A/S asked Maj-General Gichangi if we could publicly say that the Kenyan government does not support recruitment in the camps, the General first told the A/S that the Kenyan government has "no comment." Subsequently, the General agreed that the A/S could say that the Kenyans do not support such recruitment. (Note: Though the A/S told the press he had raised the issue with the Kenyan government, the A/S did not mention the Kenyan government's stated position). Minister Saitoti said that recruitment of refugees from the Dadaab camps or Kenyan/Somalis in N.E. Province is not supported by the GOK. Gichangi confirmed that recruitment had occurred in the Dadaab camps and said he viewed the recruitment as dangerous, but difficult to stop due to the fluid movement of people into and out of the camps. He further speculated that the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) had been behind the recruitment "for their own objectives." Minister Saitoti was more direct saying the GOK didn't want recruitment in the camps or in the region as recruitment attracted "bad elements" to Kenya. He suggested that the TFG confine its recruitment to Somalia.

¶8. (U) Assistant Secretary Schwartz has cleared this cable.
RANNEBERGER